LOVE ELEGIES.

Eng. Poetry vol 49.

WRITTEN

IN THE YEAR 1770.

——————Servetur ad imum

Qualis ab incœpto——————

HOR.

LONDON:

Printed for T. BECKET, the Corner of the Adelphi in the Strand. 1775.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING AND SIX-PENCE.]

LOYE ILGES.

IN THE YEAR 1770.

LONDON:

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is of no importance to the reader, whether the following ſtory be wholly ideal, or otherwiſe. If the ſucceſſive ſituations are natural, it matters not whether they be true. To the author, it is of the utmoſt importance, that thoſe, who may honour him with a peruſal, ſhould be apprized, that the preſent attempt is his Firſt in this ſpecies of compoſition. Being ever a paſſionate admirer of that celebrated elegiaſt, *Hammond*, who is deſervedly ſtiled the *Tibullus* of this country, if he has humbly preſumed to venture a few feeble ſteps in the ſame difficult path, he is well aware nothing leſs than the prop of public candor can ſupport him from falling.

ELEGY I.

He becomes acquainted with AMANDA.

RECALL, fond memory! thoſe early days,
When Science to the mind unveils her ſtore,
And, kindling there a virtuous thirſt of praiſe,
Excites ideas all unknown before.

In thoſe young days, beneath preceptive care,
Hour after hour the buſy taſk I ply'd,
The buſy taſk, a penance hard to bear!
Oft, to evade, a thouſand ways I try'd.

Impatience raſh! for ſtill the turret's bell
Proclaim'd the glad viciſſitude of play,
The ſweet indulgence let each ſchool-boy tell,
When forth I ran, with headlong ſpeed, away.

Let him, in artleſs narrative, relate
On halcyon wings how each blythe moment flew,
Heedleſs of aught within the womb of fate,
The preſent Now ſtill bounded all my view.

My ſphere of earthly happineſs was all
Compris'd within the circuit of yon' field,
To beat each rival at the bat and ball,
The nobleſt triumph fortune then could yield.

At ſuch a period, and in ſuch a mood,
When the gay ſpirits riſe each joy to greet,
With careleſs haſte as I my way purſu'd,
Amanda's form it was my chance to meet.

Her infant-form---for ſcarcely yet, at large,
The wanton ventur'd from her nurſe's arms,
The backſtring, yet, upheld her fondling charge,
While ev'ry ſtep created freſh alarms.

Can I forget?---the queſtion is a crime,
To pureſt love a crime of deepeſt dye---
Can I forget the pleaſing, bliſsful time,
When firſt her infant-beauties caught my eye?

No---e'en in childhood's dawn they ſtood confeſt,
Each budding preſage of the future fair,
E'en then, the living traces well expreſs'd
That ſenſe and virtue ſhould inhabit there.

Still, as ſhe grew, her age's rip'ning bloom
Confirm'd each promiſe infancy had made,
Still, as ſhe grew, each year confirm'd my doom,
And reaſon, now, affection's tribute paid.

And can ye doubt the progreſs of my flame?
When years together I her ſight enjoy'd,
When ev'ry day, ſucceſſive as it came,
Saw us together, as we walk'd and toy'd?

When did the garden want its faireſt pride?
When did its ſweets breathe fainteſt thro' the air?
'Twas when *Amanda* ceas'd to grace my ſide,
The faireſt, ſweeteſt flow'r was miſſing there.

When was the mead in brighteſt verdure ſeen,
With herds all grazing near the river's ſhore?
'Twas when *Amanda* mov'd the landſcape's queen,
Together as we trod the foot-path o'er.

When did the river glide with ſmootheſt wave?
When, moſt tranſparent, did its mirror ſhow?
'Twas when *Amanda* would her finger lave,
And view her image in the ſtream below.

Oh! thou dear maid! whoſe preſence thus can give
E'en things inanimate new pow'r to pleaſe,
In happineſs how envied muſt he live,
Who, thee poſſeſſing, needs no aid from theſe!

ELEGY II.

He is ſeparated from her.

ARE we not fram'd, by heav'n's ſupreme decree,
To taſte of happineſs' diffuſive tide?
Does not each creature, that around we ſee,
Unvarying follow this inſtinctive guide?

Think we, that gracious heav'n will mock the care,
That aims reſemblance to the bleſt above?
And is there aught can that reſemblance bear,
Like the pure tranſports of a virtuous love?

Such were the thoughts that in my boſom roſe,
As on *Amanda*'s face a glance I caſt;
" Behold, (I cry'd,) a pledge that heav'n beſtows,
" Its ſureſt pledge of happineſs to laſt."

Scarce

Scarce from my tongue th' unfiniſh'd accents fell,
How falſe, how fickle, ſublunary joys!
When, lo! the ſummons for a long farewel,
And one ſhort moment years of bliſs deſtroys.

A long farewel, indeed!---My ſick'ning heart
Broods o'er the gloomy interval to come,
And, wildly ruminating, e'er we part,
Shudders at exile from its deareſt home.

The ſhiv'ring Laplander, with leſs regret,
Eyes, as it ſinks, the fainting orb of light;
With leſs diſmay beholds its ſplendor ſet,
And feels th' approach of a dark, tedious night.

Amanda's eye was as the ſun's controul,
When o'er the world he looks with ray benign,
Such, as his genial warmth on nature's ſoul,
Such the warm influence of her ſmile on mine.

The

The flow'r, at noon, erects its velvet head,
But ſhrinks, at eve, each late-expanded fold;
Thus, robb'd of her, my full-blown wiſhes fled,
Nipp'd, at the root, by more than Lapland cold.

Various the ſcene my lot to undergo,
Since firſt my hated pilgrimage began!
'Twas all but varied---"mockery of woe"
E'er ſince the pupil roſe into the man.

For many a year, of emulation proud,
Learning I ſought with academic toil,
The legal furrow, many a year, I plough'd,
But ſcarce a grain repaid the ſtubborn ſoil.

Ambition, now, his dazzling glaſs would hold,
High, in the midſt, his idol, pow'r he ſhew'd;
Pale av'rice, now, would ſhake his bags of gold,
And whiſper---"'twas to pow'r the ſureſt road."

Pleaſure,

Pleaſure, a ſilken ſnare to catch me laid,
And, Proteus-like, exhauſted ev'ry ſhape;
Beauty, each faſcinating wile diſplay'd,
And forg'd new fetters to prevent eſcape.

'Twas all alike in vain---my haraſs'd mind
Ran o'er and o'er the ſame inſipid round,
A giddy circle, where ſhe griev'd to find
All was unreal, unſubſtantial ground.

Ambition, ſtill, his idol, pow'r may court,
Pale av'rice, ſtill, may hug his golden ſtore,
Pleaſure and beauty, ſtill, with fools may ſport,
Who loves *Amanda*, forms no wiſh for more.

"Where dwells the nymph"--perhaps you may enquire--
"What favour'd region holds th' inchanting fair?
"Parted from whom, what all the world deſire,
"In my eſteem, are trifles light as air."

ELEGY

ELEGY III.

He deſpairs of obtaining her.

FAST by the ſide of yon' meand'ring ſtream,
Dwells the dear nymph that cauſes all my pain,
Well might each poet chooſe her for his theme,
And, chooſing her, might well forget to feign.

For ne'er did nature, in a laviſh hour,
More gifts to charm the raptur'd ſenſe beſtow,
Nor e'er did art unite a happier pow'r,
To make each gift with doubled luſtre ſhew.

Yet, was it far unlike that rebel art,
Compelling nature foreign chains to wear,
For nature ſtill preſides o'er every part,
And art is only nature's handmaid there.

Oh! that I ne'er thoſe beauteous eyes had ſeen,
Whoſe cherub-ſoftneſs beams with mildeſt ray;
Or to thoſe lips I had a ſtranger been,
Whoſe ſyren-tale diſſolv'd my ſoul away!

Oh! that I ne'er that heav'nly ſhape had view'd,
Which all the graces did conſpire to form;
Nor in the dance thoſe mazy ſteps purſu'd,
Which love contriv'd th'incautious breaſt to warm.

What do thoſe beauteous eyes to me avail,
If on thoſe eyes to gaze be all my bliſs?
Or what thoſe lips, where hung the ſyren-tale,
If from thoſe lips I ne'er muſt claim the kiſs?

In vain, for me, that ſhape the graces form'd,
If in my arms that ſhape I ne'er muſt twine;
In vain the mazy dance my breaſt has warm'd,
If in life's maze I ne'er muſt call her mine.

Curſe

Curſe on the maxims of a venal world,
That force me, ruthleſs, from each chance of joy!
While peace, loſt inmate! from my boſom hurl'd,
Yields to a fire that burns but to deſtroy.

Weak-minded man! ſhall wayward maxims awe
The graceful purpoſe of the freeborn ſoul?
Shall inſolent caprice impoſe a law,
The birth-right of our being to controul?

Not ſuch, the notions of the golden age!
When ſterling minds were all the treaſur'd ſtore,
When native merit could the heart engage,
And ſpotleſs innocence was all the dow'r.

No coffers heap'd with gold, no creſted pride
Of blood, were then preliminaries made,
The wedded plague no ſplendid coach bely'd,
No inward eaſe for outward title paid.

The ſex were, then, unleſſon'd in the taſk,
To mock, or trifle with a lover's ſmart,
Unborrow'd, then, was affectation's maſk,
To hide the genuine feelings of the heart.

The guileleſs ſwain no ſooner felt the wound,
And told his fair the empire of her charms,
When the lov'd maid a mutual paſſion own'd,
And, unreluctant, flew to meet his arms.

Sweet interchange of thought the day beguil'd,
Chaſte ecſtacy entranc'd the fleeting night,
The circling year upon their union ſmil'd,
And heav'n, complacent, crown'd their pure delight.

Might I but follow this primæval love,
Soon would I quit the faſhion-blinded train,
Then---did *Amanda* but my ſuit approve---
I'd live, with her, a golden age again!

ELEGY IV.

He cannot reſolve to quit her.

BUT, wherefore, ſay, muſt black deſpair corrode,
And mildew, thus, affection's promis'd fruit?
What tho' with thorns my path of love be ſtrew'd,
Why muſt I ceaſe, at once, the ſweet purſuit?

Say, why muſt prudence, with her matron-brow,
Check the gay ſallies of impatient youth?
Severely rigid, not one claim allow
To the warm vows of undiſſembling truth?

Why muſt diſcretion's chilling voice pronounce
A final ſentence on my luckleſs love?
And with compulſive hand break thro', at once,
The pleaſing web induſtrious fancy wove?

Why

Why muſt it prove, at laſt, an idle dream?
Vague as thoſe forms that mock our curtain'd eyes,
When, thro' the night, enwrapt in joys we ſeem,
'Till, with the morn, each joy, deluſive flies.

An idle dream! and was it then no more?
Amanda's converſe I've ſo oft enjoy'd?
An idle dream? each kiſs, that, o'er and o'er,
The ſilent intervals of talk employ'd?

Was it a dream, when, parted from her ſight,
I chid the minutes 'till we met again?
Was it a dream, as oft, with fond delight,
I've read the traces of her abſent pen?

How did her underſtanding mark each line?
What artleſs eaſe in ev'ry period flow?
What wit and humour did her ſtile refine?
In ev'ry ſentiment, what friendſhip glow?

Inveigling

Inveigling charmer! under friendſhip's veil,
Well did'ſt thou play an unſuſpected part,
On ev'ry ſenſe impoſe a ſpecious tale,
And win thy paſſage to my guardleſs heart!

No, no---a dream?---it muſt not, cannot be---
Almighty love forbids a lot ſo hard,
Still has he found a votary in me,
Still have his altars witneſs'd my regard.

Ne'er can he ſuffer, thus, an early flame,
Nurtur'd beneath his auſpice, to expire,
Concerns it not the honour of his name,
As well to cheriſh, as create the fire?

That genial fire! whoſe ſoft progreſſive heat,
Inſenſibly, through all my boſom ſtole,
Fann'd by her breath anew, whene'er we meet,
And guiding, ſtill, each movement of my ſoul.

Let cold diſcretion threaten as ſhe may,
Let matron-prudence harſh correction try,
Their phantoms let them raiſe to bar my way,
They vaniſh all, if dear *Amanda*'s by!

What do theſe peeviſh monitors adviſe?
What is the ſyſtem ſage they recommend?
A mercenary ſyſtem I deſpiſe----
----Glare without meaning, riches without end.

Deaf to ſuch tenets may I ſtill remain!
Attentive, ſtill, to virtue's call alone,
Virtue with my *Amanda* leaves her train,
And heav'n itſelf her fav'rite cauſe will own.

Then let me droop no more, but patient wait,
Heav'n may ſome happier moment have deſign'd,
Some happier moment in the ſtores of fate,
To crown my wiſhes I at length may find.

ELEGY V.

He has Hopes of obtaining her.

SURE, 'twas ſome being of th' angelic ſphere,
That at the throne of heav'n my ſuit preferr'd,
And whiſper'd, gracious, in my raviſh'd ear---
" The virtuous wiſhes of thy ſoul are heard.

" Bleſt, as thou art, in a fond father's love,
" A better father never bore the name!
" Boldly avow a paſſion he'll approve,
" Nor that alone, he will applaud thy flame."

Fraught with the glad advice, at once I flew,
To him, at once, my paſſion I declar'd,
Began recital of *Amanda* through,
Paternal fondneſs the recital ſpar'd.

" Enough, my ſon! I've heard full oft (he cry'd)
" Th' endearing virtues that inform her breaſt,
" Your friend, already, may ſhe prove your bride"---
---The guſhing tear my gratitude expreſs'd.

But though a father, with indulgence kind,
Afford a ſanction to my heart's deſire,
Remains no taſk more delicate behind?
No further warrant does my love require?

How am I ſure, that e'er *Amanda*'s eyes
Have read that purpoſe I could ne'er reveal,
That they have pierc'd through all the thin diſguiſe
So oft aſſum'd that purpoſe to conceal?

When at her face the ſide-long glance I've ſtole,
Did glances, then, my view reſponſive meet?
When inward pangs have ſwell'd my lab'ring ſoul,
Did her dear boſom, ſympathetic, beat?

As hopes and fears alternately prevail,
Painful the conflict in a lover's mind!
Jocund, we drive before some flatt'ring gale,
Now mourn the fury of some adverse wind!

What if her friends, less partial to my vows,
Have sought some rival in my humble stead?
What if some greater rival they espouse,
And she be meant to grace some richer bed?

What if---how torturing, alas, that doubt!---
Some other youth have made his passion known,
What if some luckier youth have found her out,
And plead with merit equal to her own?

Wild, at the racking thought, I snatch my pen,
Resolv'd, at length, my secret to disclose,
Tell her my story, o'er and o'er again,
The unaffected story of my woes.

Hie thee, ſwift fancy! and direct thy flight,
Where ſweet employs the buſy fair engage,
Obſerve her well, e'er ſhe her anſwer write,
As, line by line, ſhe ſcans the heart-wrung page.

Watch, if her varying colour often go,
As oft, in turn, again ſuffuſe her cheek,
Watch, if her eye with liquid pearl o'erflow,
And the nice ſtruggle of her ſoul beſpeak.

Haply, ſhe reads it with attention cold,
Nay, ſhe may frown, and take it all amiſs,
But---ſhould her lip---preſumptuous fancy! hold---
On my poor name beſtow one eager kiſs---

It does---it does---I can her anſwer gueſs---
Lover! what tranſport ever equall'd thine!
A thouſand, thouſand kiſſes ſhall impreſs
The dear, dear ſignature that owns her mine.

ELEGY VI.

He meets with various Delays.

"SHE will be mine"---ſuch was the anſwer brought,
Such, the kind anſwer my *Amanda* gave,
Who would not envy me ſo rare a lot!
Who would not wiſh, with me, to live her ſlave!

With ſweet conceſſion, love alone can grant,
She bade me haſte to meet her longing eyes---
Too happy ſwain! what further can'ſt thou want?
What greater height can thy ambition riſe?

Enough for thee! if the lov'd fair one's hand
Has ſign'd that truth hope trembled to believe;
Enough! if thou haſt had her ſoft command
From her own mouth its ſanction to receive.

It was enough! ſhe met thee with a ſmile,
Expreſſive emblem of her dear intent!
Enough! that roſy modeſty, the while,
Spoke, all in bluſhes, unreſerv'd conſent.

Amanda's preſence wing'd each jocund hour,
On ſwifteſt pinions flew the ſummer day;
Felicity confeſs'd *Amanda*'s pow'r,
For time in one Elyſium ſtole away.

Full oft would fancy, in excurſive range,
Plan o'er the conduct of ſome future ſcene,
Some future ſcene in life's domeſtic change,
Anticipating years to roll between.

Ah me! the fairy-viſion will not laſt,
Reluctant fancy ceaſes now to roam;
The ſummer-day, Elyſian hours are paſt---
Her filial duty calls *Amanda* home!

" 'Tis

" 'Tis but for one ſhort month I go, no more---
" Such is the term our holy rites require---
" For one ſhort month we part---when that is o'er,
" Poſſeſſion ſoon ſhall crown thy fond deſire."

She ſpoke, and parted from my aching view---
How did my throbbing heart that inſtant ſwell!
You, that have lov'd as long, have lov'd as true,
You moſt will pity, for you beſt can tell!

But one ſhort month!---alas, how vaſt an age!
In love's account, how infinite a ſpace!
When will old Time have crept this weary ſtage,
What will accelerate his lazy pace?

At length, the month is o'er! and buoyant thought
Springs upward at th' approach of promis'd bliſs---
Ah, ſimple ſwain! has not experience taught
No hope chimeric proves ſo oft as this?

Again,

Again, ſhall Cynthia's ſilver orb increaſe,
And twice, again, that ſilver orb ſhall wane,
E'er boſom cares are huſh'd to gentle peace,
E're thy full heart is eas'd of all its pain.

Full many a legal clog ſhall mock thy ſighs,
Perplexing intricacies vex thee ſtill---
Oh! how could ruthleſs law ſuch clogs deviſe,
Such heavy clogs, to fetter nature's will!

Oh! how could ſordid intereſt contrive
Such bars to croſs affection's deareſt aim!
How, with ſuch ſubtilty, invention ſtrive
Rights to defeat that from our nature came!

Yet, perſevere! as thou haſt done before,
Yet, yet, a little, thy deſires controul,
A Week, a day, an hour, a minute more
Compleats the long-ſought purpoſe of thy ſoul!

ELEGY VII.

He obtains her at laſt.

WHO, now, ſhall ſay?---" fond hope is at an end,
" And 'twas a phantom I've purſu'd ſo long"---
True---I no more on airy hope depend,
Poſſeſſion realizes, now, my ſong.

Thanks to kind heav'n! that I enjoy, at laſt,
The long-lov'd object of my ardent vow;
Thanks to my love! each idle fear is paſt,
And nought but happineſs awaits me now.

Tell me not here, that happineſs is vain,
That accident the vapour may deſtroy,
That each gay ſcene is intermix'd with pain,
And ſorrow treads upon the heel of joy.

I know it well;. but in ſecurer place
I build that ſtructure, coveted by all,
Columns, on ſtrong and adamantine baſe,
Support the fabric, and protect from fall.

Hither, ye heav'n-born virtues! hither come!
Arrange yourſelves in beauteous order round,
Amanda's boſom ever was your home,
Where can my happineſs have firmer ground?

Miſtake me not, nor call the ſketch abſurd,
A form, that love's delirious pencil drew,
All, that e'er heard of her, her virtues heard,
All, that e'er knew her, know them to be true.

Say, filial piety!---'tis thine to lead---
A child more duteous could a parent find?
Say, kindred-fondneſs! doſt thou know, indeed,
Brother, or ſiſter, one alive, more kind?

Say,

Say, gen'rous friendſhip! couldſt thou e'er conceive
A heart with nobler ſentiments beat high?
Say, foſt'ring pity! when a wretch would grieve,
Whoſe hand ſo quick to wipe his tearful eye?

Say, fortitude! if e'er thou didſt oppoſe
With breaſt more reſolute the frowns of fate?
Say, chaſtity! could e'er thy virgin-ſnows
A ſyſtem, purer than her thoughts, create?

How can I reckon---'twould a volume fill---
What brilliant qualities her mind adorn?
Senſe, wit, and taſte, eaſe, elegance and ſkill,
Theſe, and her virtues, were together born.

Good as a daughter, ſiſter, and a friend,
Good, thro' each varied character in life,
Who can e'er doubt, ſuch characters muſt blend,
Harmonious blend, their pow'rs to form the WIFE?

Yes,

Yes, deareſt partner! I have found, in thee,
That happineſs, the world not yields beſide,
Loſt are the pleaſures of that world on me,
Summ'd up in thee, alone, my charming bride!

Chaſte be the ſtrain! ſhould it one wiſh betray,
One other wiſh ſhould thought preſume to frame,
Humbly to heav'n one other wiſh convey,
To grant a father's with a huſband's name!

To view ſome copy of that darling face,
To feel the touches of ſome infant-hand,
Some miniature of each maternal grace---
How would my grateful heart with joy expand!---

But this to heav'n I leave---the precious boon
It gave in thee, has my deſert o'er bleſt,
Why ſhould I covet further bliſs ſo ſoon?---
In thy lov'd boſom let me breathe the reſt!

FINIS.